

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 02058 01 OF 02 231007Z

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 L-03 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /079 W

-----231025 009486 /12

R 230832Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9453

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 2058

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, NI

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT ISSUES STATEMENT ON TRADE UNION PROBE FINDINGS:  
PROSCRIBES ELEVEN LABOR LEADERS

REF: (A) LAGOS 13860, (B) LAGOS 0306

1; SUMMARY: NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT HAS ISSUED STATEMENT BRIEFLY SUMMARIZING FINDINGS OF LAST SUMMER'S TRADE UNION PROBE TRIBUNAL AND ANNOUNCING PENALTIES FOR SEVERAL MAJOR LABOR LEADERS. STATEMENT APPEARS TO BE MEANT TO COUNTER DEMANDS FOR PUBLICATION LONG-AWAITED TRIBUNAL REPORT AND SEEMS TO HAVE EFFECTIVELY REMOVED FROM FUTURE PARTICIPATION IN TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES TOP TRADITIONAL LABOR FIGURES. GOVERNMENT STATEMENT DOES NOT TOOP TO EXPEDIENT OF BLAMING FOREIGN ORGANIZATIONS FOR LOCAL ILLS. ITS ACTION SEEMS TO PENALIZE COMMUNIST-LEANING ORGANIZATIONS MORE THAN WESTERN-ORIENTED ONES. MOST TRADE UNIONISTS APPEAR TO BE TAKING THIS LATEST MOVE QUIETLY BUT WITH BLOOD-LETTING PRESUMABLY NOW OVER, GOVERNMENT MUUT GET ON WITH CONSTRUCTIVE ASPECTS ITS SELF-APPOINTED TASK OF REMAKING LABOR MOVEMENT. END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 LAGOS 02058 01 OF 02 231007Z

2. NIGERIAN FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT (FMG) ISSUED STATEMENT FEBRUARY 11 OUTLINING IN BRIEF FORM FINDINGS OF LAST YEAR'S TRADE UNION INVESTIGATION TRIBUNAL AND ANNOUNCING SEVERAL PUNITIVE ACTIONS BASED ON PROBE PANEL'S RECOMMENDATIONS. THE TRIBUNAL, SAID THE STATEMENT, FOUND THAT THE AFFAIRS OF "SOME" OF THE CENTRAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS WERE RUN IN CARELESS AND UNSYSTEMATIC FASHION.

THE ELADERSHIP OF THOSE ORGANIZATIONS EXHIBITED LITTLE SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY AND SOME LEADERS WERE PATENTLY DISHONEST AND SELFISHLY MOTIVATED. "MASSIVE FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL SUPPORT" FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WAS USED RECKLESSLY AND WASTEFULLY--A GOOD PORTION OF THAT AID WENT INTO POCKETS OF INDIVIDUALS. THE CENTRAL BODIES WERE SAID TO HAVE BEEN RUN BY A FEW TOP LEADERS AS DICTATORIAL "CULTS." INTER-UNION RIVALRY, SPURRED BY PERSONAL FEUDS BETWEEN LEADERS, WAS FOUND TO BE CAUSE OF INDUSTRIAL UNREST IN THE COUNTRY.

3. STATEMENT ANNOUNCES THAT, BASED ON TRIBUNAL'S RECOMMENDATIONS, FMG HAS DECIDED TO PROSCRIBE FROM ALL FUTURE TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES THE FOLLOWING LABOR MOVEMENT LEADERS, ALL OF WHOM HELD HIGH POSITIONS IN FORMER LABOR CENTRALS AND HAD BEEN SELECTED AS LEADERS IN STILL-TO-BE SANCTIONED NIGERIAN LABOR CONGRESS (NLC): CHIEF E. O. ODEYEMI (GENERAL SECRETARY UNITED LABOR CONGRESS--ULC), WAHAB O. GOODLUCK, S.U. BASSEY (PRESIDENT, GENERAL SECRETARY NIGERIAN TRADE UNION CONGRESS--NTUC), R. A. RAMOS, J. U. AKPAN, P. A. ISAGUA (PRESIDENT, SECRETARY GENERAL, TREASURER NIGERIAN WORKERS COUNCIL--NWC), S. O. ADENIRAN, P. A. NWANERI (MEMBERS NWC EXECUTIVE COUNCIL), CHIEF MICHAEL IMOUDU, M. J. SULE (PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBER OF INDEPENDENT NIGERIAN UNION OF RAILWAYMEN). OTHER DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS LISTED AS WELL. FINANCIAL HOLDINGS OF DR. J. O. OTEGBEYE (PROMINENT COMMUNIST IDEOLOGUE AND COVERT LEADER OF BANNED SOCIALIST FARMERS AND WORKERS PARTY WHICH TIED TO NTUC) AND BABS ANIMASHAUN (GENERAL SECRETARY OF NATIONAL

UNION OF NIGERIAN BANK EMPLOYEES WHICH PROSCRIBED LAST MAY-- LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 LAGOS 02058 01 OF 02 231007Z

SEE LAGOS 6207) ARE TO BE SUBJECTED TO MORE DETAILED SCRUTINY BY LONG-STANDING ASSETS INVESTIGATION PANEL. CHIEF ODEYEMI IS ORDERED TO TRANSFER PROPRIETORSHIP OF MOTOR DRIVERS AND MECHANICS VOCATIONAL SCHOOL, FORMERLY SUPPORTED BY AFRICAN-AMERICAN LABOR CENTER, AND PERSONALLY HELD TITLE TO LAND ON WHICH SCHOOL STANDS TO NIGERIA MOTOR DRIVERS AND ALLIED TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION. OTHER ULC LEADERS A. I. A. OKWESE AND M. O. KING ARE DIRECTED TO "MEND THEIR WAYS" IF THEY ARE TO BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE NLC. ALSO WORTHY OF NOTE IS THAT OWNERSHIP OF NEW NTUC HEADQUARTERS BUILDING, CONSTRUCTION OF WHICH HEAVILY FUNDED BY SOVIETS, MUST BE TURNED OVER TO GOVERNMENT TRADE UNION ADMINISTRATOR. GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ENDS WITH DECLARATION THAT JUSTICE MINISTRY AND POLICE SHOULD MAKE FURTHER DETAILED STUDY OF TRIBUNAL HEARINGS AND PROSECUTE THOSE WHO HAVE COMMITTED CRIMINAL OFFENSES.

4. INTERESTINGLY, TUCKED INTO ENUMERATION OF PUNITIVE MEASURES TO BE TAKEN AGAINST OFFENDERS, IS FMG'S FIRST PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT PROHIBITION OF FOREIGN AFFILIATIONS BY LOCAL

LABOR ORGANIZATIONS WILL INVOLVE LOSS OF FUNDS AND OUTSIDE EXPERTISE TO NIGERIAN WORKERS. GOVERNMENT STATEMENT PROMISES TO RECTIFY SITUATION BY ENACTING PROVISIONS TO ENABLE CERTAIN PROPORTION OF PROCEEDS OF PROPOSED CHECK-OFF SYSTEM TO GO TO NATIONAL LABOR CENTRAL.

5. REACTION TO GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT HAS BEEN AS EXPECTED. FEBRUARY 17 //NEW NIGERIAN// HEADLINES COMPLAINTS BY IMOUDU AND GOOLUCK. IMOUDU, THE GRAND OLD MAN OF THE NIGERIAN LABOR MOVEMENT, DECLARES THAT GOVERNMENT HAS NO RIGHT TO BAN HIM AS WORKERS APPOINTED HIM "LIFE PRESIDENT." GOODLUCK ECHOES SIMILAR ARGUMENT AND ADDS THAT FMG MUUT PROVE HE CORRUPT OR INCOMPETENT BY PUBLISHING FULL TEXT TRIBUNAL REPORT. HOWEVER, NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS TO DATE GENERALLY SUPPORT GOVERNMENT MOVE AND TRADE UNIONS FOR THE MOST PART HAVE TAKEN NEWS QUIETLY. EASTERN WING OR RAILWAYMEN'S UNION HAVE PUBLICALLY URGED LIFTING OF BAN ON IMOUDU AND SULE BUT PROTEST MEETINGS OF OTHER GROUPS WHICH WE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 LAGOS 02058 01 OF 02 231007Z

UNDERSTAND WERE TO HAVE BEEN HELD OVER WEEKEND FAILED TO MATERIALIZE. ULC'S CHIEF ODEYEMI HAS SUBMITTED HIS RESIGNATION AS LEADER OF MOTOR DRIVERS UNION AND ANNOUNCED HE QUITTING TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES IN NIGERIA UNTIL PROSCRIPTION RESCINDED AND HIS HONOR VINDICATED.

6. COMMENT: IT APPEARS FMG IS TRYING TO COUNTER RISING TRADE UNIONIST'S CLAMOR FOR PUBLICATION OF PROBE TRIBUNAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS (OVER WHICH IT HAS AGONIZED SINCE REPORT

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 02058 02 OF 02 231022Z

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07  
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R 230832Z FEB 77

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 LAGOS 2058

SUBMITTED LATE LAST AUGUST) THROUGH THIS PARTIAL RECITAL OF PANEL'S FINDINGS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT REPORT HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN FROM GOVERNMENT PRINTERS AND WE WOULD NOW EXPECT IT WILL NOT BE PUBLISHED IN FULL. PRESUMABLY, DECKS NOW CLEARED TO ISSUE GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER (WHICH REPORTEDLY IS AT PRINTERS) STEMMING FROM REPORT AND TO PROCEED WITH MORE CONSTRUCTIVE ACTIONS SUCH AS RESTRUCTURING OF LABOR MOVEMENT AND ESTABLISHING NATIONAL COMPULSORY CHECK-OFF SYSTEM.

7. GOVERNMENT HAS HAD THE NECESSARY BLOOD-LETTING. IT HAS DEMONSTRATIVELY TRIED TO ELIMINATE THE NATION'S TOP TRADITIONAL LEADERS FROM FUTURE PARTICIPATION IN LABOR ACTIVITIES. HOWEVER, IT NOTEWORTHY THAT GOVERNMENT HAS EXTRACTED MORE PLASMA FROM CUMMUNIST-ORIENTED NTUC THAN WESTERN-LEANING, BREAD-AND-BUTER ULC. I NOTABLE THAT STATEMENT SYAS LITTLE ABOUT FOREIGN ORGANIZATIONS PER SE. ALTHOUGH HEAVY PENALTIES IMPOSED ON NWC LEADERSHIP REPORTEDLY DONE BECAUSE THEY WERE FOUND TO HAVE MISMANAGED FUNDS FROM ICFTU, STATEMENT DOES NOT TAKE EASY OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE SCAPEGOAT OF FOREIGN INFLUENCES AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT, FOCUSING INSTEAD ON PECULATION  
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PAGE 02 LAGOS 02058 02 OF 02 231022Z

OF LOCAL LEADERS. THIS SHOULD NOT BE SEEN AS SIGN THAT DOOR NOW OPEN FOR FOREIGN ORGANIZATIONS TO RESUME ACTIVITIES HERE AS BEFORE. WHILE WHITE PAPER SHOULD TELL US MORE, THE PORTENTS ARE THAT FMG WILL ACT IN FUTURE TO MAKE LABOR UNIONS MORE SELF-SUFFICIENT AND FREE FROM FOREIGN CONNECTIONS.

8. PERHAPS WITH FOREKNOWLEDGE OF THEIR FATE, A FEW OF THE PENALIZED LABOR LEADERS HAD EARLIER ARRANGED TO MOVE INTO THE PURELY POLITICAL ARENA. WE UNDERSTAND THAT S. U. BASSEY HAS BEEN SELECTED AS CHAIRMAN OF A NEWLY ELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL IN CROSS RIVER STATE. J9. O. OTEGBEYE ALSO WON A SEAT IN ILARO (OGUN STATE) COUNCIL. ALTHOUGH CHIEF ODEYEMI WAS ELECTED COUNCIL MEMBER OF LAGOS AREA CONSTITUENCY, HE FAILED IN HIS BID FOR CHAIRMANSHIP. WITH HIS PROSCRIPTION/RESIGNATION FROM TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES, WE PRESUME HE MAY HAVE LOST HIS LOCAL BASE FOR POSITIONS HE HAS HELD IN OATUU AND ILO GOVERNING BODY.

9. IN SUM, FMG HAS TAKEN MAJOR STEP ALONG SLOW PATH OF REMKAINING NIGERIAN TRADE UNIONISM INTO GOVERNMENT'S IMAGE OF A DEMOCRATIC LABOR MOVEMENT USEFUL TO NATION'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS. MANY TRADE UNIONISTS PROBABLY HAPPY

THAT BLOOD-LETTING DONE AND MOST APPEAR FOR MOMENT AT LEAST TO  
ACQUIESCE IN GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM  
AS A WHOLE. FMG, HOWEVER, MUST KEEP  
MOMENTUM GOING IN MONTHS AHEAD ON RESTRUCTURING AND, ULTIMATELY,  
RECOGNIZING A REBORN NLC.  
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## Message Attributes

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